

article of the Constitution of the Medical Society of the State of California on the objects of that organization:

CONSTITUTION: ARTICLE I
Name and Objects

Section 1. This Association shall be styled the "Medical Society of the State of California."

Section 2. The objects of this Association are: To form and constitute a representative body of the regular medical profession of the State of California, to encourage the unity and harmony of the said profession throughout the State, to advance its interest as a body of citizens and a liberal profession, and to promote the advancement of medical, surgical, and hygienic science. . . .

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State Medical Association Membership in 1901.—The membership report of Secretary George H. Evans, on page 358, stated that the Society, in 1901, had 262 active members, twenty-two permanent members, and twenty-one honorary members.

When the names on the membership roll are scanned, it is found that, among the 305 members above noted, 178 were in practice in San Francisco, twenty-eight in Alameda County, and thirteen in Sacramento, and that there were only twelve members who were in practice south of the Tehachapi (five of the twelve, Doctors C. L. Bard, H. Bert Ellis, Walter Lindley, H. S. Orme, and W. L. Wills later being elected presidents of the California Medical Association); while practically all of these twelve members from the southern section of the State were members of the faculty of the former College of Medicine of the University of Southern California.

In those days prior to the reorganization of the American Medical Association (reorganized on the basis of one national association, one constituent state association, and only one component unit in each county), organized medicine in California was represented by two major societies: (1) the Medical Society of the State of California, covering all the north, and (2) the Southern California Medical Society, including all the area south of the Tehachapi. In California, as in other states in the Union, the reorganization of the American Medical Association, on the basis above outlined, brought about decided improvements for both organized and scientific medicine, as is amply evidenced by the remarkable growth of the constituent state associations; the California Medical Association, for example, having today a membership in excess of 6,000.

ANOTHER HISTORICAL ITEM:
ON MEDICAL SPECIALTIES

Medicine Specialties as Forecasted Some Fifty Years Ago.—At about the same time that the volume, *Transactions of the Medical Society of the State of California*, was received, the editor had occasion to look up some articles on mineral springs and related topics, from the pen of Dr. Joseph P. Widney of Los Angeles, who is celebrated in the annals of California medicine as the founder of the Los Angeles County Medical Association, the College of Medicine of the University of Southern California and the *Southern California*

Practitioner. In the May issue of Volume II of the *Southern California Practitioner* for 1887 (printed more than fifty years ago) will be found a delightful editorial from the Doctor's pen on "Specialism Run Mad," some excerpts from which, as follows, are still worthy of note:

SPECIALISM RUN MAD

It is beginning to be a question what is to be the end of the mania for specialties in medicine. We have been wont to smile somewhat at the practice of our long-queued brethren of the Middle Flowery Kingdom, where one man takes medical charge of the brain, another of the stomach, another of the bowels, yet another of the heart, and so on through the anatomical list; yet a glance at our medical journals, or at the cards of physicians in the columns of a popular paper, rather extracts the twist from the smile. . . .

Passing on, Doctor Widney continues:

. . . Possibly in that coming day, when the sick man's list of medical attendants shall only be limited by the number of separate organs to the human body, some youthful scion of a specialist progenitor shall exhume from the cobwebs of the old garret some moth-eaten book upon general practice, and with a look of vague wonder upon his countenance shall inquire as he turns over its unfamiliar pages the meaning of it all, and shall receive for reply some such answer as this: "This, my son, is an old heirloom, handed down from a distant ancestor, who in the dimness of the past practiced some rude sort of healing art. It is said, my son, that instead of, like myself, making a specialty of some such department as diseases of the distal phalanx of the little finger, he even professed to treat diseases of the human body in general. It was a primitive age, my son, an age when such an erudite work as my three volumes upon congenital peculiarities in the anatomy of the nail of the little finger would not have been appreciated. Such refinements of science, my son, were as yet beyond their crude ways of thought. . . .

And, finally, Doctor Widney says:

. . . How shall he be narrow and broad at the same time?

. . . Brethren, the editorial head has it. Specialize everything. It does not claim originality in the idea. It caught the thought from the card of a physician who advertised twelve specialties besides surgery and general practice.

. . . Vive la specialty! . . .

Had the above expressions come from a lesser seer* than this remarkable man, who maintained his literary and other activities up to the age of 96, they might have been passed by without notice. Emanating, however, from him, his prognostications may still afford reason for pondering.

Other State Association and Component County Society News.—Additional news concerning the activities and work of the California Medical Association and its component county medical societies is printed in this issue, commencing on page 232.

* Biographical sketches of Joseph Pomeroy Widney appeared in *CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE* in the following issues: Vol. 44, No. 4, April, 1936, page 292; Vol. 44, No. 5, May, 1936, page 396; Vol. 46, No. 6, June, 1937, page 398; Vol. 49, No. 2, August, 1938, page 106, editorial, Passing of Joseph P. Widney, Founder of the Los Angeles County Medical Association; Vol. 49, No. 2, August, 1938, page 161, Obituary.

The routine use of the tuberculin test in prenatal care can be easily used in clinics and private practice for discovery of active tuberculosis. Unsuspected active tuberculosis occurred in 1.7 per cent of those tested in one county in California where the early institution of collapse therapy prevented extension of the pulmonary disease.—Charles Ianne, *Amer. Rev. of Tuber.*, Dec., 1939.